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STATEMENT BY SECRETARY CLINTON

Syrian Convictions of Human Rights Activists

The sentencing of Syrian lawyer Haitham Maleh to three years in prison is an example of Syria's failure to comply with minimum international human rights standards. Convicting Maleh for exercising free speech and defending universal human rights sends a clear message to the world that Syria does not tolerate peaceful forms of expression. We call on the Syrian government to meet its responsibilities under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It should demonstrate its commitment to international legal norms by releasing Maleh and other Syrian citizens, including Muhannad al-Hassani and Ali Abdullah, who have been imprisoned solely for seeking to exercise their most fundamental human rights.

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